

# The InterAct

July/August 2005



## 2005 TODSTWD Event a Success



**By Misty Ross, TODSTWD Chair**

The 2005 Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work Day (TODSTWD) event was a tremendous success! The ICSEW, in partnership with the Department of General Administration (GA) Visitor's Services and the Office of the Governor, hosted approximately 700 children and parents on May 19, 2005 in the Capitol Building.

The day began with a surprise for Governor Gregoire when she was proudly introduced to the crowd by her daughter, Michelle. The Governor spoke to the crowd of over 600 people about the importance of TODSTWD. She said she took each of her daughters with her to work when they were

children and believes it directly affected the paths they have chosen in life.

The Governor and Michelle stayed for nearly an hour after the speech to meet and greet children and parents, sign autographs, and pose for photos.

Children spent the rest of the day receiving stamps in their passports by each office they visited in the Capitol Building. Children and parents alike enjoyed exploring the offices and learning new things from volunteers stationed around the building.

The ICSEW is grateful for all the assistance they received from the GA and the Office of the Governor. The goal for next year is to build on the 2005 event's success. We look forward to seeing you at the 2006 event!



## Today's Women, Today's Leaders

**By Melissa Beard, Conference Committee Chair**

The ICSEW Conference Committee is pleased to announce the theme for the 2006 Biennial Conference: "Today's Women, Today's Leaders." Governor Gregoire feels it is important for state-employed women to know that they can be leaders in any position, whether it be the head of an agency or someone who provides direct services to Washington's citizens.

All state employees are invited to join the ICSEW on May 8-10, 2006 at the Three Rivers Convention Center in Kennewick, Washington. The follow-

ing hotels have rooms reserved for the conference at the government rate: Hilton Garden Inn, Silver Cloud, Holiday Inn Express, and Super 8.

The Hilton Garden Inn is located across the street from the convention center and the other hotels provide shuttles to the convention center. When you reserve your room, be sure to mention the ICSEW.

Also, the committee is still accepting workshop proposals. If you have a workshop idea, please e-mail me at [mbeard@wtsc.wa.gov](mailto:mbeard@wtsc.wa.gov) for an application form. Keep checking the *InterAct* for more information. See you in 2006!

## ICSEW Event Information

**July 12, 2005** - ICSEW Annual Transition meeting featuring Governor Christine Gregoire. Meeting held at the Lacey Community Center in Lacey, Washington.

**July 15, 2005** - "How to Build a Successful Team" by Ms. Kathy Bote'. Training class held at the Office of the Attorney General in Lacey, Washington.

**July 22, 2005** - "How to do Your Job Well AND Manage Life's Challenges" by Ms. Sandra Smith. Training class held at the Lacey Fire Hall, Station 34 in Lacey, Washington.

## Farewell From the Chair



**By Vicki Rummig, ICSEW Chair**

Well folks, this is my last article as Chair of the ICSEW. On July 12, 2005 I will be passing the gavel to the new chair, Dianna Gifford (Department of Natural Resources). It has been an interesting and exciting 2 years as leader of the ICSEW.

My first goal as Chair was to make the ICSEW more politically proactive. The committee still has a ways to go, but several steps have been taken to move in that direction.

On February 17, 2004 we submitted an opinion paper to the Department of Personnel regarding performance-based pay. This was a significant step toward fulfilling our mission of advising the state's executives on issues that impact women's employment.

The other significant event was our discussion with Governor Gregoire and Peter Bogdanoff, Governor's Policy Advisor, about the ICSEW and its future.

I look forward to the time when the Office of the Governor contacts the committee to ask for advice on policy issues.

In the meantime, the committee needs to continue learning about and monitoring legislation. The unfortunate truth is that it takes a full-time, dedicated person to do an adequate job, and that is a resource the ICSEW does not currently have.

The committee has already reached my second goal which is to increase contact with the Governor. Regular meetings with the Governor have not been standard for the ICSEW, but things changed this year.

In addition to our discussion with the Governor, she spoke at the statewide Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work Day event and will wel-

come new members at the July 12, 2005 Annual Transition meeting.

Another improvement I have seen is the adoption of administrative policies, including establishing an annual budget, bill paying, communications, etc.

We have also seen a marked improvement in the *InterAct* newsletter with a high percentage of quality, original material submitted by ICSEW members. We have gained visibility statewide, notices of events are distributed better, and we have made a conscientious effort to become more involved with what is going on in our state.

An example includes our presence at the Civil Rights Conference hosted by the Human Rights Commission in December 2004. Proof of increased visibility comes in the form of invitations and announcements we receive asking for the ICSEW's participation in statewide events. Look for us at the Diversity Fair on August 4, 2005.

While the ICSEW has made progress in the past 2 years, I cannot take credit for any of it. The truth is the ICSEW has a number of bright, willing, eager, and able members who make things happen. My role has been to facilitate and to provide insight on ideas presented. I make sure members are talking to the right people inside and outside of the committee, that they have the resources they need to get things done, and listen when they are trying to work through an idea.

I may have thrown out an idea or two but they wouldn't have been realized without the hard work of the membership. My challenge to Dianna as the new chair is to be a facilitator and a mentor and to continue to recognize the strengths that all the great women of the ICSEW possess.

My challenge to the membership is to bring forth all their great ideas (don't be shy), work hard to see the good ideas acted on, and provide support to the chair whenever you can.

I look forward to watching the ICSEW grow and will forever think fondly of my experience.

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## Women's Health and Wellness-- Through the Journey of Our Lives

**By Jan Ward Olmstead, Health and Wellness Committee Chair**

Approximately 325 people attended the first Washington State Women's Health and Wellness Day on May 11, 2005 in Tumwater, Washington.

The ICSEW along with the Health Care Authority, the Department of Health, the Department of Labor and Industries, and DSHS joined together to celebrate and encourage women to be responsible for their own health.

The Honorable Pat Thibadeau, Washington State Senator and Vice Chair of the Senate Health & Long-Term Care Committee, opened the event. Senator Thibadeau has been a long time leader in health issues impacting women and families.

"For too long, Women's Health Day hasn't gotten the attention it deserves," said Senator Thibadeau. "But the health care community is increasingly recognizing the unique nature of women's health issues and responding by focusing on what we can do to keep

women healthy, and I applaud the emphasis on prevention."

She read a proclamation from Governor Christine Gregoire declaring May 11 Women's Health Day and May 8-14, 2005 as Women's Health Week in Washington State.

The event included a vendor's fair and a speaker's agenda. Vendors provided an incredible array of information on issues important to women. Health care providers were also present to conduct vision, hearing, blood pressure, bone density, and spinal screenings.

In addition to Senator Thibadeau, speakers included Nadja Galadram, owner of Let's Grow Soil; Connie McCloud, Puyallup Tribe Cultural Coordinator; Richard DeGarmo, compound pharmacist; and Patty Hayes, Department of Health Assistant Secretary.

Assistant Secretary Hayes left participants with seven "easy" ways to better health:

1. Breathe.

2. Build in steps.

3. Drink water and eliminate soda from your diet.

4. Give yourself a break.

5. When stress hits, stop, take a breath, and then figure out what to do.

6. Laugh a lot.

7. Look at each day as a present to yourself.

The event was a success due to the efforts of state health care agencies and other organizations partnering to raise awareness of women's health issues. The event informed participants that:

- Women from all cultures and at every stage of life have unique health needs that require sensitivity from professionals.

- Women rely on partnerships with social, health, and other services to promote awareness of health issues.

- Women should be encouraged to promote health and prevent disease and illness by taking simple steps to improve their own health.

## Organ Donation--is it Right for You?

**By Sue Brown**

Why is a person motivated to become an organ donor? Maybe it is the diagnosis of a loved one with a life-threatening illness. Maybe it is simply having a generous spirit. Whatever the reason, it is an extraordinary offer of hope to many people.

Electing to donate your organs after you pass on is one way to help, but many healthy people can also consider donations while they are still living.

The number of Americans waiting for organs on the national transplant list is more than 87,000! That is a huge number of people that need this life saving donation.

I would like to talk about my personal story and how I became involved. Several years ago I was devastated by the news that Cory, the 4-year-old daughter of my friend, Barbara, was diagnosed with leukemia. Doctors told her that a bone marrow transplant could potentially save Cory's life.

I had to find out what I could do to help. My blood was HLA tissue typed and placed on the National Marrow Donor Program Registry (NMDP). Meanwhile, Cory underwent all the

procedures to eradicate her body of the cancer, including chemotherapy.

Although my blood was not a match for Cory, it was for another person. About a year later, the American Red Cross Bone Marrow Program in Portland, Oregon informed me that I was a match for a young man with leukemia in Calgary, Canada. At that time, the odds of finding a match on the registry were 1 in 20,000.

All potential donors are counseled about the procedure itself and told of the risks to the donor and major implications to the patient. When I decided to proceed, I was given a thorough medical exam. The young man needed to be strong enough for the procedure. He underwent chemotherapy to destroy all the cancer-causing white cells and was isolated for his protection from infection as he would have no immune-producing cells.

In April 1991, bone marrow was extracted from five small punctures on my back. I became the 335th donor obtained from the register. The marrow, which is rich in stem cells, was flown in a cooler by Red Cross to Calgary where it was transfused into the recipient.

It was a humbling experience knowing that I may have saved someone's life. The experience became meaningful in ways that are hard to describe.

Each year more than 35,000 children and adults in the United States are diagnosed with diseases for which a marrow or blood cell transplant may be a treatment option. There are more than 5.5 million donors and more than 40,000 cord blood units on the NMDP Registry, but more are needed.

American Indian, Alaska Native, Asian, African American, Hispanic, Latino, Native Hawaiian, Asian Pacific Islander, and multi-racial patients face a greater challenge of finding a match than Caucasian patients.

I encourage everyone to look into the living donor network sites. If you are eligible, I urge you to get involved. Today, Cory is a cancer survivor. After years of excellent care from the specialists at Children's Hospital of Orange County, California, she is a student at the University of California at Los Angeles and is a very confident and strong young woman.



## Agency in the Spotlight Washington State Department of Transportation

By Kimberly Colburn

Transportation is an essential part of our state's economic health. A sound transportation system is needed to support our growing economy, to reduce the costs of congestion, and link people and businesses.

The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) and its employees work every day to make transportation in our state safe and efficient. Our mission is to keep people and businesses moving by operating and improving the state's transportation systems vital to our taxpayers and communities.

WSDOT plans, constructs, operates,

maintains, and manages key elements of a complex "multimodal" transportation system, which includes more than 7000 miles of official state highways (only 9 percent of all road miles, but carrying nearly 60 percent of all traffic), a Washington State Ferries fleet that serves more than 25 million annual riders, aid to 129 general aviation airfields, special passenger and freight rail services, and public transportation.

In virtually everything it does, WSDOT works in partnership with other levels of government, transit agencies, port districts, regional councils, Indian tribes, the private sector, and local communities.

## Lesbian/Gay Liberation: How Far Have We Come?

By Nancy Welton

Good question. Even though it may seem like Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgendered (LGBT) people are relatively safe from discrimination, especially in more progressive cities, the struggle toward equality for them is fairly recent.

As early as the 1960s, police often raided bars where gays gathered to socialize. Gays were herded into paddy wagons and placed under arrest. The arrested were often beaten, assaulted, and humiliated by officers. The gay people had no recourse, no defense, no rights.

In June 1969, the story changed dramatically. One evening at the Stonewall Inn in New York, gay men and drag queens refused to take the abuse any longer and resisted arrest. When word of this resistance spread, something inside LGBT people started to change and a movement for "Gay Liberation" began.

Much progress has been made but the changes are slow and abuses continue. LGBT people are still discriminated against in employment, housing, and public facilities.

In Washington State, more than two decades after the first bill was introduced, we still do not have a law that prohibits discrimination based on sex-

ual orientation. Incidences of violent attacks against LGBT people still occur. LGBT youth are still persecuted at their schools and homes, sometimes turning to homelessness or suicide to cope.

A group of state employees recently planned a special exhibit in honor of LGBT Pride Month as part of a series of cultural events. They were inundated with harsh criticisms, not as critiques of the exhibit itself, but with judgments about the LGBT community and the agency that allowed the exhibit.

I applaud the people who asked honest questions and tried to figure out how to honor their personal beliefs, while still treating LGBT people with dignity and respect. I also appreciated the many warm e-mails of support from other state employees.

Perhaps there will come a day when special months and parades can be a celebration of full equality as we all work together for the greater good.

But at this point, LGBT people join with their friends and parade down the streets in the month of June, imagining for an hour or so that the streets are as safe for us as they are for others.

## Women Leaders in State Government Brigette Smith: In the Office and on the Fire Scene

By Evelyn D. Harris

Brigette Smith's career began as a ninth grade English teacher in Bremerton, Washington. Today, Brigette is the Executive Secretary for the Board for Volunteer Firefighters and Reserve Officers (BVFF) and a volunteer herself.

When Brigette applied for the position at BVFF, she was under the impression that it was an office position at which she could use her English skills. When she found out she would be a manager and a leader, she remembered to set her goals and expectations high. She would be offering her co-workers opportunities to experience big life lessons.

Following her deepest convictions is what led Brigette to become a volunteer firefighter. Brigette was asked to assist with some injured teens and administered what little first aid she knew. Unfortunately, one of the teens didn't make it through the night. The girl's mother called Brigette and expressed her heartfelt thanks for all she had done. This experience ignited Brigette's drive to do more.

There are 18,000 volunteer firefighters who are dedicated to saving children, adults, and communities in Washington State. Brigette considers herself very fortunate to have made this career leap from teacher to admin-



istrator of the volunteers who help us statewide. "Follow your passion," is what Brigette proclaims.

To this end, her husband has just started pursuing his education and career dreams. Even though they don't see each other very much right now, they both know what it means to follow your passion. They take the lead, set goals high, and don't use crutches.

Brigette is the third Executive Secretary at the BVFF and the first female to hold the position. Because she is also a volunteer firefighter, she understands, respects, and generally cares for the men and women volunteers. Her motto is "be positive, train, and embrace."

She travels often and flexes her training schedule to meet the needs of the BVFF and its volunteers. When she is not volunteering you may find Brigette with her daughter tending to their four horses. She wants people to know that she is a life-long learner. The only person who can hold you back is yourself.

## WorkFirst Clients Receive 4000 Pounds of Clothing

By Wendy Sue Wheeler, Education Committee Co-Chair

Hundreds of state employees helped collect approximately 2 tons of new and used professional clothing for WorkFirst clients. All donations have gone to the DSHS/Employment Security Department WorkFirst program.

The clothing will be given to customers who are returning to work or entering the workforce for the first time. In 2002 over 3200 pounds of clothes were donated through the ICSEW-sponsored drive. In 2004 this number increased to approximately 4000 pounds!

WorkFirst is Washington's welfare reform program. When a client enters WorkFirst, they are screened for readiness to attend Job Search. If they are ready, they will begin a full-time, 1 week workshop and actively search for employment. WorkFirst covers child care and out-of-pocket expenses while the client is in Job Search. "Clothes Closets" are maintained at many workshop sites.

The ICSEW Education Committee coordinated the donation efforts and forwarded the clothing. Thank you for your contributions!

# Insect Stings

**By Dr. Alan Greene, author of *From First Kicks to First Steps* and founder of [www.DrGreene.com](http://www.DrGreene.com)**

Insect and spider bites can cause an allergic reaction. Stinging insects (such as bumblebees, yellow jackets, hornets, wasps, and fire and harvester ants) are more likely to cause an allergic reaction than biting insects (mosquitoes, horseflies, deerflies, spiders, bedbugs, and black flies).

Most bites and stings do not require emergency medical care. However, approximately 0.5% of the population develop severe allergic reactions (anaphylaxis) to insect stings.

Allergic reactions to insect bites or stings occur very quickly, usually within minutes. Severe reactions, although rare, can be rapidly fatal if untreated.

## Symptoms

Common symptoms include:

- Red, swollen, or warm lump.
- Hives.
- Rash.
- Itching, tingling, numbness, burning, tenderness, pain.

Serious allergic reactions (anaphylaxis) occur when symptoms spread. These can include difficulty breathing,

dizziness, nausea, diarrhea, fever, muscle spasms, or loss of consciousness. Call for emergency medical help right away.

## First aid for minor reactions

- If the sting is from a honey bee, remove the stinger from the skin if it is still present. Carefully scrape the back of a knife or other thick straight-edged object across the stinger if the victim can remain still, and it is safe to do so. Otherwise, you can pull out the stinger with tweezers or your fingers, but avoid pinching the venom sac at the end of the stinger which will cause more venom to be released.

- Wash the site thoroughly with soap and water.

- Cover the site with a clean, cold compress or a clean, moist dressing to reduce swelling and discomfort.

- Over the next 24 to 48 hours, observe the site for signs of infection (such as increased redness, swelling, pain).

- Sores from scratching can become infected. Keep bites clean and, to prevent infection, don't scratch.

## First aid for serious reactions

If the victim is having a severe reac-

tion or the victim has been stung inside the mouth or throat, call immediately for emergency medical assistance.

- Check the victim's airway, breathing, and circulation. If necessary, begin rescue breathing and CPR.

- Reassure the victim. Try to keep him or her calm, as anxiety will worsen the situation.

- Remove nearby rings and constricting items because the affected area may swell.

- Use a special allergy first aid kit, if available. (Some people who have serious insect reactions carry it with them.)

- If appropriate, treat the victim for signs of shock. Remain with the victim until medical help arrives.

## Treatment

Non-serious, local reactions usually go away in 3 to 7 days with no treatment. For symptom relief, use an ice pack or wet compresses. (Or, 1 tsp. meat tenderizer mixed with 1 tsp. water applied to bite.)

Drug therapies include:

- Antihistamines and anti-inflammatories for itching and swelling.
- Topical and oral steroids (may be

prescribed by your physician.)

- Antibiotics (if infection occurs).

If the reaction is serious enough that a hospital visit is warranted, antihistamines may be given intravenously and epinephrine (adrenaline) may be administered. Sometimes serious reactions happen again soon after the first reaction stops. Your provider may want to observe you for 8 to 12 hours.

## Preventing insect stings and bites

- Avoid rapid, jerky movements around insect hives or nests.

- Avoid perfumes and floral-patterned or dark clothing.

- Use appropriate insect repellents and/or protective clothing.

- Use caution when eating outdoors, especially with sweetened beverages or in areas around garbage cans which often attract bees.

If you have had a serious reaction to an insect bite, keep an emergency insect sting kit and wear a medical alert bracelet.

--Submitted by Sue Brown,  
Department of General  
Administration

# Human Trafficking is Present-Day Slavery

**By Linda Furkay**

Trafficking is present-day slavery and victimizes 27 million human beings worldwide. It is one of the most lucrative criminal enterprises in today's world economy.

An excellent example of trafficking has appeared in the days following the Indian Ocean tsunami where disturbing reports have surfaced about vulnerable people, especially children, being victimized by modern-day slavers.

Trafficking is recruiting, transporting, and selling human beings as a cheap source of labor. It works by taking advantage of people who desperately need money, food, shelter, or protection and using violence, threats, and coercion to control them.

In most countries where trafficking victims are working, sexual exploitation and an ongoing need for a large amount of cheap labor supports this criminal activity.

In the United States, it is estimated that nearly 20,000 people have been victims of human trafficking.

Trafficking is big business here in Washington, where we have a large, hard-to-meet demand for cheap agricultural labor.

There are many conditions in Washington that are conducive to trafficking including a large international border, many international ports, and many remote and isolated areas.

Washington is leading the country in fighting human trafficking. I am the Department of Health representative on the Washington State Task Force Against Trafficking of Persons. This task force has made significant progress in raising public awareness, proposing legislation, and developing training for service providers and law enforcement personnel.

The report from the Washington State Task Force Against Trafficking is available online at <http://www.cted.wa.gov/DesktopModules/CTEDPublications/CTEDPublicationsView.aspx>.

## ICSEW Cell Phone Drive



### Put Your Old Cell Phones to Good Use to Help Save Lives

The ICSEW conducts an ongoing "recycle your cell phone with rechargeable battery and cords drive." Donated cell phones are delivered to Verizon Hopeline which supports non-profit organizations committed to combating domestic violence, providing emergency relief, and supporting health and education initiatives.

Verizon donates airtime and distributes phones nationally to domestic violence programs, the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, and local government and law enforcement agencies for domestic violence victims.

Send your old phones to Jan Ward Olmstead (Health Care Authority) at mail-stop 42721 or deliver them to the Health Care Authority's front desk at 676 Woodland Square Loop SE, Lacey, Washington. For more information contact Jan Ward Olmstead at 360-923-2803 or [jolm107@hca.wa.gov](mailto:jolm107@hca.wa.gov).

*The InterAct is published by the Communications Subcommittee of the Interagency Committee of State Employed Women (ICSEW). Photocopying, distributing, or posting of this publication is strongly encouraged. This publication is available in alternate formats. Views stated in re-printed articles are informational and do not necessarily reflect the views of the ICSEW. All persons interested in submitting articles or ideas for this publication should contact their agency's ICSEW representative or:*

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Printed on recycled paper.